

Small Islands **Big Issues**

Issues in Brief

Small Islands and Fishing: Caught in a Global Squeeze

The statistics are alarming. Of the 17 major fishing grounds worldwide, 13 are depleted or in serious decline. Almost every commercial fish species in every ocean and sea has been classified as "depleted", "fully exploited" or "overexploited" by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Global catches have stagnated since 1989.

Today, small islands are caught in the same squeeze facing the global fishing industry: too many boats chasing too few fish. Many small islands have suffered declining fish catches over the past decade, especially of fish that live close to shore, where most fishermen operate. In Fiji, for example, the local tuna-processing plant was recently shut down for two months because of poor catches.

For developed countries, declining fish supplies may mean less profit for the industrial-scale fishing fleets that ply for fish offshore, and loss of jobs in fishing communities. When fish becomes scarcer and more expensive, as present trends suggest, consumers can switch to meat and poultry. But for small island countries, diminishing catches can have a devastating impact on local food supplies — for some islands, fish are the only indigenous source of animal protein — and on the livelihood of men and women who fish or work in associated industries, as boat-builders, packers, distributors and retailers.

Foreign Fleets

Although small island States have rights over all the resources within their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), which extend 200 nautical miles from their shorelines, most of these countries lack the capital and technology to engage in extensive industrial-scale offshore fishing. Instead they sell the fishing rights for their offshore waters to high-technology fleets from developed countries, which are eager to maintain or extend those arrangements as their domestic fish supplies are exploited to a maximum. The foreign exchange generated by these fishing fees is often a major revenue source for islands, especially for Pacific countries such as Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu, which preside over EEZs far larger than their land areas.

Surveillance of the harvest from those foreign fishing vessels, however, has often proved extremely difficult and expensive for small island countries, which lack the equipment and trained personnel to monitor and enforce the provisions of fishing arrangements. Although it is difficult to prove, many island peoples suspect that foreign fleets take more than their agreed catches. Global estimates suggest that illegal fish catches could run 30 to 50 per cent above reported catches. This would help to explain how an ever-expanding world fleet continues to operate while officially losing over \$20 billion annually, comments a



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recent article in *The Economist*. Such poaching accelerates the depletion of fish stocks, threatening long-term sustainability, as well as depriving small island States of much-needed revenue.

In theory, the inshore fishing which provides food for small island countries is not seriously affected by foreign fleets, which hunt different fish stocks in waters farther offshore. Local fish supplies are generally being depleted by an increasing number of artisanal fishermen using low-technology methods. But in Solomon Islands, for example, local fishing people claim that foreign tuna fleets illegally take small fish from their lagoons to use as bait. Because these bait fish are also a food source for the inshore fish, this practice can affect local catches.

Unless small island countries can monitor and manage both offshore and inshore fishing within their EEZs, it is only a matter of time before they face the same crisis of depleted stocks that now confronts developed countries.

Damage to Coral Reefs

A related problem faced by small islands is the accelerating destruction of coral reefs — often called the “rain forests of the sea”. The reefs are a critical part of marine ecosystems, and a native habitat for many fish species, but these fragile environments are being disrupted by growing development and increasing numbers of tourists.

In Pacific islands such as Western Samoa, Fiji, the Marshall Islands and Tonga, coral reefs have also been damaged by destructive fishing practices that use dynamite and other explosives left over from World War II to kill or stun fish. All the Pacific island countries report major declines in reef-based fish stocks, crustaceans and shellfish. In Maldives, coral is “mined” for use in building new homes. Parts of the Caribbean have experienced a decline of up to 50 per cent in coral reefs and reef-based fish over the past 40 years.

Better Management Needed

The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will address ways in which small islands can cooperate more closely in managing marine resources to ensure their long-term sustainability.

Integrating coastal and marine resource management into overall development strategies is key to developing sustainable fishing policies. This includes better waste treatment — to reduce marine pollution — and protection of mangroves, sea grass beds and lagoons that are rich habitats for fish.

To help stabilize fish populations, many small islands advocate better fisheries management and strengthening of the enforcement powers of regulatory bodies to ensure adherence to fish-catch guidelines. Small islands are also requesting assistance to improve their domestic technology for fish storage, distribution and marketing—which could reduce the considerable amount of waste and spoilage.

Partly in recognition that conventional management techniques have failed in small island countries, there is a trend among island peoples and international experts towards reviving traditional knowledge and ways for regulating use of the ocean's resources. Involvement of local villages is especially important for many small islands, because marine resources are usually owned communally, with individuals having users' rights rather than a private property right. Indigenous wisdom that, for example, prohibits fishing on certain days in relation to lunar cycles has been found to have scientific grounds in the spawning cycles of fish. But, unless they are consciously promoted, such traditional methods tend to break down under pressures from urbanization and the commercialization of fisheries.

Small islands are also seeking input into high-seas fishing negotiations being conducted by the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. Of special concern is unregulated fishing for tuna in international waters by industrial fleets. Because tuna migrate widely, excessive high-seas harvests deplete catches within the EEZs of many Pacific islands. It is hoped that, before they conclude in August 1994, the UN negotiations will produce strong guidelines, if not legally binding rules, to regulate high-seas fishing. These regulations would build on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which will enter into force in November 1994, although its provisions have been generally accepted for over a decade as customary international law.

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Small Islands and Trade: Economic Choices, Environmental Impacts

In the global trade game, small islands find it difficult to get ahead. Most are heavily dependent on imports, but have limited resources to offer distant world markets — a trade equation that can add up to major development problems. The limited economic options open to small island countries can affect their environment and reduce their possibilities for long-term sustainable development.

For most small island countries, heavy dependence on imports is a fact of life. Small domestic markets make local production of most goods unprofitable, and demand for consumer goods is on the rise as standards of living improve. The ratio of imports to gross domestic product (GDP) is around 20 per cent for developing countries as a whole, but for most small islands that ratio is well above 50 per cent — and over 90 per cent for seven islands, according to 1991 United Nations data.

As exporters, small islands are constrained by several handicaps. Because of their limited resources, they are unable to produce many goods of value on the international market. Many islands, especially in the Pacific, are far from international shipping routes, which makes the cost of transporting goods prohibitive. Moreover, the terms of international trade have turned dramatically against commodity-produc-

ing countries over the past decades, as prices for their exports have been outpaced by prices for the finished goods they need to import. Because many small islands rely on one or two export commodities — such as coconuts, sugar, spices or bananas — they are at the mercy of shifts in prices determined by market forces far beyond their control.

Poor Terms of Trade

Given the lack of diversification of small island economies, price disruptions can have an immediate impact: the decline of coconut prices has had devastating effects on countries such as Western Samoa, which relies on coconut-related products for two thirds of its total export income. In Sao Tome and Principe, a steep fall in the international price of cocoa — the commodity which accounts for 90 per cent of exports — has had a severe impact on the national economy; the country now has one of the highest debt-service ratios in the world. While export income has fallen, import costs have risen, locking small island countries into a vicious circle of low-priced exports and high-priced imports from which it is difficult to escape.

International Agreements

Many islands, especially in the Caribbean, have benefited over the years from preferential trade



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agreements with Northern countries, through either the Generalized System of Preferences — negotiated under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) — or special regional agreements, usually based on former colonial ties. The Lomé Convention, a trade and aid accord between the European Union and 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries — including 25 small islands — has been seen as a model of North-South cooperation. Under Lomé, European countries have imported Caribbean-grown sugar at prices much higher than the world market price. While this has boosted Caribbean economies, there is concern that such agreements have discouraged island countries from diversifying their economies.

New trade accords are also cause for concern among some small islands: some Caribbean countries see disadvantages in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which offers to Mexico, on an exclusive basis, United States trade benefits that were once also offered to their region. Some analysts argue that NAFTA may also encourage potential investors from North America to set up businesses in Mexico rather than the Caribbean.

Environmental Impact

International trade arrangements can have a direct effect on the environment of small island countries by encouraging them to tailor their agricultural production to the export market, with insufficient regard for the impact on their ecosystems. In Saint Lucia and Dominica, for example, the prices of the bananas they sell to European countries have been kept artificially high under the Lomé Convention. To take advantage of these preferential prices and concessionary access to European markets, local farmers have greatly increased banana production. Donor countries have offered assistance in setting up new plantations, providing fertilizers, pesticides and other inputs, and building the needed infrastructure, such as feeder roads.

Heavy use of agrochemicals, however, has begun to take its toll on fragile island ecologies. Expansion of plantations into marginal lands,

especially hillsides, has led to pesticide run-off, which has contaminated freshwater supplies, polluted coastal waters and damaged coral reefs. In Fiji, expansion of sugar production has created comparable environmental problems.

Some small island countries have begun to re-examine their agricultural policies and to seek ways to diversify their exports, in ways which both improve environmental sustainability and provide economic stability. In the Caribbean, this is of particular importance, considering that the preferential access to the European market for bananas is being challenged by other countries, especially Latin American banana producers, in light of the new rules governing agricultural trade resulting from the recently concluded Uruguay Round of GATT.

Green Barriers and Markets

As the international community becomes more environment-conscious, many developing countries — including small island States — are concerned that new environmental regulations can create trade barriers that deny their products access to foreign markets. In an attempt to make their own trade more environmentally sound, some industrialized countries have begun to require “eco-labelling” on imports, which specifies the source or ecological impact of the product. However, most developing countries lack the expertise and marketing resources to adhere to these standards. This is an area in which training and assistance in marketing strategies from donor countries and international experts could make a difference.

But environment-driven trends in demand for international goods and services also present opportunities for developing countries, with the growth in demand for environmentally friendly products in wealthier countries. Dominica, for example, has begun to export natural cosmetic products made from coconuts to “green markets” in the North.

Many island States are seeking new avenues for “niche” marketing that could give their exports a comparative advantage. In one approach, developing countries — including small

islands — are attempting to obtain royalties from the exploitation of their biological resources. Varieties of plant and animal life unique to these habitats are now utilized by Northern transnationals — which sell refined seeds, medicines and agrochemicals back to the countries of origin at high prices. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity and in other fora, developing countries are seeking compensation for their contribution to this lucrative international trade, which would provide economic incentives for them to preserve their natural resources.

For Pacific islands, niche marketing has generally meant small-scale production of such items as exotic spirits and handicrafts that they can offer exclusively on the world market.

Search for Sustainability

Development of new products reflects the search by island countries for a role in the world trading system which will enable them to achieve sustainable development. Some islands have found such opportunities through export-processing zones — offering low-wage havens for foreign transnationals or services for the North. Jamaica has become a key service centre for data processing, and St. Lucia has begun promoting itself as a transshipment centre for trade between Latin America and North America. Mauritius, once heavily reliant on sugar exports, successfully diversified its economy through an export-processing

zone based on textiles, and is now developing an offshore banking operation. Bahrain has already met success specializing as a centre for such services. Many international experts think that such services, rather than product exports, hold the key to sustainable development for small island countries. But there is also concern that, without proper planning and regulation, export-processing zones can lead to substandard working conditions and environmental damage.

In preparatory negotiations for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, island countries have sought assistance from the North in obtaining the environmentally sound technologies that would enable them to manufacture finished goods from their own raw materials, without undermining their natural resource base. They have also stressed the importance of improving international market access for their exports.

Major decisions on international trade are determined under agreements such as GATT, NAFTA or the Lomé Convention. However, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States represents a drive to build a political consensus on these issues. It will place firmly on the international agenda the concerns and priorities of small island countries with regard to trade, economic choices and environmental impacts.

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A Plan for Small Islands: Highlights from the Programme of Action

At the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Governments will adopt a Programme of Action that will make recommendations in 15 key areas. The main problems faced by small island countries and the proposals being considered for inclusion in the Programme of Action are outlined below.

1 Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise

The problem: Any rise in sea levels—as predicted to result from global climate change—will have “significant and profound effects” on the economies of small islands, says the action programme. “The very survival of certain low-lying countries would be threatened.” Other possible effects of climate change would include damage to coral reefs and fisheries, increased frequency and intensity of storms and intrusion of salt water into freshwater supplies.

According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), climate models indicate that, because of the greenhouse effect, the Earth’s average surface temperature may increase by 1.5° to 4.5° C over the next 100 years. This warming would cause the sea to rise in two ways: through thermal expansion of ocean water and through the shrinking of polar ice caps and glaciers. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that, if no specific measures are taken to abate greenhouse-gas emissions, these two factors are likely to cause the sea to rise by around 65 cm from current levels by the year 2100.

The Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and which became legally binding in March 1994, is the main international instrument for controlling climate change. The Convention calls for developed country Parties (i.e., those that have ratified it) to take measures aimed at returning their emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. The adequacy of this and other commitments will be reviewed at the first session of the Conference of Parties, scheduled for March 1995 in Berlin.

Action proposals: The Programme of Action states that the provisions under the Framework Convention on Climate Change should be considered “inadequate” and that further action should be taken at the first meeting of the Conference of Parties effectively to address the problem of global climate change.

Other recommendations focus on assisting small islands to monitor and predict sea-level rise and to develop strategies for how they can best adapt if such changes occur.

2 Natural and Environmental Disasters

The problem: At least 13 of the 25 most disaster-prone countries are small island developing States. Islands frequently suffer extensive damage and loss of life from cyclones and hurricanes—which are more intense in tropical zones and over small land masses—as well as from volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.



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The impact of natural disasters is particularly devastating on small-scale island economies, according to information from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). In Tonga, Hurricane Isaac destroyed 50 per cent of housing and 90 per cent of the banana crop, the primary export commodity, in 1982. Hurricanes left 75 per cent of the people of Dominica homeless in 1980. The economic damage caused by an average disaster can run as high as 58 per cent of GNP (as it did in Vanuatu, which had four such disasters during the period 1980-1990). Commercial insurers are often unwilling to provide coverage for high-risk areas, which then impedes private investment in the country.

Action proposals: National and regional plans, with international assistance, should aim to improve disaster preparedness and early warning systems, and encourage development of disaster recovery plans. National and regional disaster emergency funds should be established, with joint public- and private-sector support, to assist in recovery efforts, especially in areas where insurance is not available on the commercial market.

3 Waste Management

The problem: Disposing of garbage and sewage is particularly difficult for small islands. Increasing amounts of waste, resulting from growing consumption and urbanization, have frequently led to pollution of lagoons and oceans, and contamination of groundwater. Limited land areas make the option of landfill unsustainable in the long term.

The disposal of toxic, hazardous or radioactive waste by other countries on small islands has also generated much concern. Their isolation and dependence on marine and land resources make small islands highly vulnerable to contamination. Many islands have expressed concern about possible damage by foreign ships carrying toxic and radioactive materials through their seas. There is no agreement as to whether reference to this should be made in the action programme.

Action proposals: National and regional measures, with international support, should be taken to encourage imports and local products that are biodegradable or low-waste, set up regulatory measures and pollution standards as part of waste

management plans, implement international legal conventions governing shipments of hazardous waste and ocean dumping, build port facilities to collect waste from ships, and introduce cleaner technologies.

4 Coastal and Marine Resources

The problem: Most small island countries are highly dependent on their coastal and marine resources—on fish, for food and export income, and on healthy and unpolluted reefs, lagoons and beaches to sustain ecosystems and attract tourism. But increasing development, especially for tourism, threatens the very natural resources on which islands depend. Overexploitation and destructive fishing practices by local and foreign fishing fleets are reducing fish catches. Yet most island Governments lack the funds and technology to assess and monitor these valuable resources, the first step toward sustainable management.

Action proposals: Recommendations include development of national integrated coastal zone management plans, monitoring programmes and fisheries policies; strengthening of regional fisheries organizations and information-sharing; and negotiation of mutually advantageous fishing agreements between small islands and foreign fishing groups. The concerns of small islands should also be reflected in the negotiations on high-seas fishing being held by the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, which will conclude in August 1994.

5 Freshwater

The problem: Many small islands face severe constraints on both the quality and the quantity of freshwater, which set tight limits on sustainable development and cause health hazards. This is particularly the case for low-lying coral-based islands where groundwater supplies are limited and are protected only by a thin permeable soil. Even where rainfall is abundant, access to clean water has been restricted by inadequate storage and delivery systems.

In island urban areas, growing population size and per capita use are outpacing water supplies. Certain island industries, such as tourism and canning, are profligate consumers of freshwater. Water supplies are contaminated by untreated human, livestock and industrial waste,

and will be further threatened if, as predicted, sea level rises and salt water intrudes into ground-water supplies.

Action proposals: Small islands should develop integrated national water plans, including measures to build, maintain and protect watershed areas, irrigation systems and water distribution and collection networks and to promote water conservation and pollution prevention. Islands should improve their capacity to assess water supplies, and develop or acquire appropriate technologies and training for sewage disposal, desalination and rainwater collection. Regional and international partners should provide technical assistance and improve access by islands to environmentally clean technologies.

6 Land Resources

The problem: The small size of many islands creates intense competition for land, whether for towns and cities, agriculture, commercial forestry, tourism or mining. Contributing to the problem are population growth and land tenure systems.

A major long-term management issue for small islands is degradation of land because of overuse, deforestation or the effects of natural disasters. Also, the search for an improved quality of life, accompanied by growing demands for cash income, has encouraged greater production of cash crops for export. This in turn has led to increases in the size of cultivated areas and the use of more mechanized forms of agriculture which rely on environmentally harmful agrochemicals.

Action proposals: Small islands should formulate comprehensive land-use plans and regulations and economic incentives to promote sustainable land use, improve land-tenure and administration systems and support reforestation programmes, with regional and international cooperation.

7 Energy

The problem: Most small islands are heavily dependent on imported oil for transport and electricity generation, with energy often accounting for more than 12 per cent of imports. They also rely heavily on local fuelwood and other biomass for cooking. Current use of fuel tends to be very

inefficient, with negative economic and environmental consequences.

The large-scale commercial use of renewable energy, such as solar or wind power, is limited by lack of appropriate technologies, investment capital and knowledge.

Action proposals: Small islands should promote energy conservation and efficiency with appropriate incentives and strengthen research on renewable energy, with regional and international support. Recommendations requesting industrialized countries and international institutions to assist island countries in acquiring clean and renewable energy technologies at reduced cost have proven controversial and have yet to be finalized.

8 Tourism

The problem: Tourism is a main source of revenue for many small islands—one of the few development options they have—but its impact on island environments and indigenous cultures threatens to ruin the very beauty and diversity that draws tourists. As an industry, tourism is both resource-intensive (high consumption of water, land and capital) and waste-intensive, affecting coastal ecosystems.

Action proposals: It is imperative that small islands carefully plan tourism development. This should include balancing development with other needs for land and coastal resources; requiring environmental impact assessments for all projects; developing guidelines for design and construction of tourist facilities to minimize environmental impact; and adopting measures to protect the cultural integrity of island peoples. Regional cooperative efforts should aim to harmonize industry standards and improve marketing and packaging of tours.

9 Biodiversity

The problem: Small islands are renowned for the diversity and uniqueness of their plant and animal species, but because of the small size, isolation and fragility of island ecosystems, their biological diversity is among the most threatened in the world. Deforestation, coral reef deterioration and the introduction of non-indigenous species are the most significant causes.

Because both land and marine resources are often communally owned, conservation efforts will need actively to involve the local community.

Action proposals: Small islands should develop integrated strategies to conserve biodiversity, promote community support for those efforts, and ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Nationally and regionally, small islands should keep buffer stocks or gene banks of endangered species and improve research, species inventories and information exchange on biological resources, including biotechnology.

The international community should provide improved access to financial and technical resources that small islands need to pursue conservation and research efforts, as well as access to environmentally sound biotechnology. Countries worldwide should make greater use of import restrictions under the CITES Convention, and support strategies to protect small islands from the introduction of non-indigenous species.

10 National Institutions

The problem: Small island Governments often lack the administrative resources needed to pursue sustainable development, and, as with many countries, the way government ministries or departments are structured does not encourage integrated planning and management of resources.

Action proposals: Small islands need to strengthen their government institutions and administrative capacity, especially their environmental agencies, and improve the awareness and involvement of community groups. National and local governments should develop and enforce appropriate environmental regulations. Donor countries should improve access to the financial and technical assistance and training that islands may need to strengthen their national institutions.

With support from the international community, small islands should develop a Small Island Developing States Information Network (SIDS/NET) to facilitate the exchange of experience among islands.

11 Regional Institutions and Technical Cooperation

The problem: The limited human resources of small island States and their geographic isolation make regional cooperation especially important.

Action proposals: On a regional basis, a Small Island Developing States Technical Assistance Programme (SIDS/TAP) should be developed. Regional sustainable development centres should be established to promote research and training. Model environmental guidelines and environmental law training manuals should be drafted by regional institutions for adaptation by national officials. The international community should support these regional efforts.

12 Transport and Communication

The problem: Transport and communication are the lifelines linking small island States with the outside world, but distance and isolation have resulted in high transport costs and limited options for many islands, especially for many rural and outer-island communities. The quality and frequency of international shipping and air services is largely beyond national control.

Action proposals: With international support, small islands should continue to upgrade transport and communication services, with particular attention to environmental protection, safety and innovative low-cost solutions. Regional cooperation should be strengthened, including possibilities for consolidating national airline services to avoid fragmenting regional markets. Quarantine services need to be improved nationally and regionally.

The international community should help develop innovative, energy-efficient transport to move people and cargo to and from island ports without the need to build high-cost infrastructure. A proposal that developed countries should promote arrangements to lower international telecommunications costs to small island States has yet to be agreed on.

13 Science and Technology

The problem: Greater scientific and technical capacity and training are needed in small island States, particularly for developing and maintain-

ing new environmentally sound technologies. At the same time, traditional indigenous knowledge is increasingly dominated by modern science and technology, and needs to be better integrated.

Action proposals: Small island States should promote research and development, particularly in areas where local technologies and traditional practices have great relevance, and encourage the use of environmentally friendly technologies through regulations and economic incentives. Regional databases, especially ocean sciences networks, could be of assistance.

The international community should facilitate access to environmentally sound technologies, using, among other strategies, joint ventures and multilateral financial mechanisms. It should fully involve scientists from small island States in marine scientific research, and take account of island needs in various United Nations scientific programmes.

14 Human Resource Development

The problem: Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, and thus attention must be given to enhancing the quality of human life in small island societies. Poor health services, nutrition and housing, low levels of female participation in development, high population densities and growth, and weak social services indicate a need for attention to human resources.

Action proposals: With regional and international support, small islands should improve basic services to urban and rural settlements, including family planning and health services, and work to eliminate poverty. They should strengthen the role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and women, and improve education and training, particularly for environmental management.

15 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

At the close of the final pre-Conference negotiating session, Governments had yet to agree on most of this crucial chapter, which will focus on the financing and other elements needed to put

the programme into action. Among the areas on which they seek agreement are:

- Whether international financing for sustainable development programmes should be "new and additional" or derived from better use of existing resources;

- Whether a specific funding mechanism should be named to channel financial assistance;

- To what extent the international community should provide financial and technical assistance on concessional terms;

- How the international community should assist small islands in improving their terms of trade in international commodity markets and in diversifying their exports;

- How the international community should facilitate access to environmentally sound technologies, and how to take into account the intellectual property rights (patents and copyrights) of the owners of the technologies (usually corporations in the industrialized countries);

- Whether a "vulnerability index" being developed by small island States should be used to supplement more traditional statistics such as per capita GDP, and how such an index should be developed and used;

- Whether the UN Development Programme (UNDP) should be responsible for coordinating a feasibility study of SIDS/NET (Small Island Developing States Information Network);

- How to support the development of national environmental legislation in small island States, as well as their participation in international legal arrangements;

- Whether the UN Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development should establish a focal point to coordinate implementation of the Programme of Action;

- The roles of UNCTAD, UNDP and UNEP in implementing the Programme of Action;

- Whether there should be a second Global Conference within the next five years; and

- When and how the outcome of the Global Conference should be reviewed by the Commission on Sustainable Development.

